

In 1965, Medicare was established to demonstrate that this Nation cares about its senior citizens, that it cares whether or not they receive medical treatment, and, ultimately, that it cares whether they live or die. In 1965, only 46 percent of America's senior citizens had health coverage. Today, 99 percent of American seniors are covered for medical expenses.

Today we are at a crossroads. We must decide if we will break our sacred oath to millions of Medicare recipients by forcing them to pay more for less care, wait longer for personal care, and have less control over who provides that care.

There is a fundamental question that we must ask ourselves when the Republican leadership asks you to cut \$270 billion from Medicare to pay for a tax break for the wealthy: Will we vote to take the CARE out of Medicare? Will we vote to take the care out of Medicare?

That, Mr. Speaker, is the question we must all ask ourselves.

This Congressman says "No."

MAJORITY OF AMERICANS SAY REPUBLICAN MAJORITY IN CON- GRESS IS GOOD FOR AMERICA

(Mr. SCARBOROUGH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, during the August recess I heard the same message over and over again, and that is we need to move forward, we need to be bold, we need to dare to make differences that the Democrats have refused to make for the past 40 years. I bought a book, "A Tribute to Robert Kennedy," and I read one of the most moving speeches, his 1966 speech in Johannesburg. Bobby Kennedy said:

The future does not belong to those who are content with today, apathetic toward common problems and their fellow man alike, timid and fearful in the face of new ideas and bold projects. Rather it will belong to those who can blend vision, reason and courage in a personal commitment to the ideals and great enterprises of American Society.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot be content with a status quo. We have got to save Medicare, we have got to balance the budget, and we have got to reform welfare. That is what the Republican Party has talked about doing for the past 8 months. The American people in every poll that is cited agree with us. We have to move forward. Fifty-three percent of Americans believe that the Republican majority in Congress is good for America. Only 33 percent oppose. Sixty-five percent believe that we need to reform Medicare in a very important manner. Mr. Speaker, that is what we are here to do.

I ask the Democrats in this body to heed the words of Bobby Kennedy, to dare to make a difference, dare to reform this Government, and dare to push America into the 21st century stronger than what it was when it left the 20th century.

WE CANNOT LET THE SENIORS OF THIS COUNTRY DOWN

(Mr. WARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, I accept that challenge that we have just heard from the other side of the aisle, but I will tell my colleagues what I have run into in my series of meetings in my district in Louisville, KY, over the last 2 weeks.

Mr. Speaker, in 10 separate meetings from one part of the community to the other I heard the same thing. What I heard was a reflection of fear, a reflection of the concern on the part of the seniors who, yes, say we do need to make some small changes to keep our system afloat. "But what changes are being proposed," I have been asked. "What changes will we see from Speaker GINGRICH and the Republican plan?"

Mr. Speaker, we do not know yet. That is the disappointment of this August break. We need to make sure we preserve the benefits, as they are expected by the seniors of this country, and not let them down when it comes to their health care.

HOLD THE LINE ON FEDERAL SPENDING BEFORE IT GOES THROUGH THE CEILING

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, according to the Department of Treasury, the new debt ceiling that Congress approved in 1993 will be reached sometime in October. The debt ceiling was \$4.9 trillion. We are currently borrowing, and we are currently borrowing \$4.6 trillion. So, we are going to reach that debt limit. This means that the Government's ability to borrow additional money will be exhausted by November, and the House and Senate will be asked to increase the debt ceiling for the 78th time since 1940.

Since I and other fiscal conservatives of both parties firmly believe that we should put our fiscal house in order by making sure we are irrevocably committed to balancing the budget before increasing the debt ceiling, we are facing a potential cash-flow problem. That is because in next year's budget we are calling for a borrowing of about 10 percent, and revenues coming into the Federal Government only account for about 90 percent of that required spending. So that is going to mean a cash-flow program, it is going to mean prioritizing spending.

As an enthusiastic supporter of the effort to use the debt ceiling to achieve a balanced budget, I have joined with 160 members of the Debt-Limit Coalition to pass legislation that will eliminate the deficit within 7 years.

Later this month, Congress will present the President with a historic

package of spending and tax cuts that will achieve that goal. If he vetoes this bill and does not present a credible alternative, we will be compelled to use the pending debt-ceiling vote to force the issue of the Federal Government's out-of-control spending.

Mr. Speaker, I insert for the RECORD the next 3½ paragraphs, and I conclude by saying now is the time to hold the line on Federal spending before it goes through the ceiling.

Some critics of the Republican budget-cutters, many of whom are those who helped get us into the Federal debt morass, say that cutting spending on social programs is mean-spirited and cruel, and that this is only designed to put pressure on the President and force him to take the blame for shutting down the Government.

But there is ample precedent for Congress using the debt limit as leverage to resolve budget battles, including 1985 during the debate of the Gramm-Rudman balanced budget act and in 1990, when the Democratic Congress used the looming debt ceiling to force President Bush to raise taxes.

So this isn't a partisan issue. It's an American issue. As a dairy farmer and former Michigan legislator, I have persistently advocated tax cuts and spending restraint. Now is not the time to back off. Now is the time to hold the line on Federal spending, before it goes through the ceiling. Thank you very much.

REMINDING OUR YOUNG GENERATION THAT FREEDOM DOES NOT COME EASY

(Mr. MONTGOMERY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, 14 Members of the House of Representatives went to Pearl Harbor this last week to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the V-J victory. We were led by the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. STUMP], chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

As my colleagues know, it is good that we have these celebrations to remind our young generation that really freedom does not come easy at all. Many Americans sacrificed their lives for this country, and, Mr. Speaker, over 50 percent of the Americans living today and most of the people in this Chamber today were born after World War II. So we have to let them know of the problems we had back 50 years ago. Over 400,000 young Americans, 18 and 19 years old, did not come home. We cannot forget them.

LET US DO WHAT WE ARE PAID TO DO

(Mr. DURBIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, I spent the August recess crisscrossing the State of Illinois from Chicago to Carbondale meeting with a variety of